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## INTRODUCTION AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON THE QUALITY OF HOUSING AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

Barry S. Wellar, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography and  
Research Associate, Institute for Social and Environmental Studies  
University of Kansas

and

Thomas O. Graff, Graduate Assistant, Department of Geography  
University of Kansas

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Mrs. Mary Vance, Editor  
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INTRODUCTION AND SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON  
THE QUALITY OF HOUSING AND ITS ENVIRONMENT

by

Barry S. Wellar, Assistant Professor,  
Department of Geography, and Research  
Associate, Institute for Social and  
Environmental Studies, University of  
Kansas

and

Thomas O. Graff, Graduate Assistant,  
Department of Geography, University  
of Kansas

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1938 the American Public Health Association (APHA) published its pioneering work, Basic Principles of Healthful Housing.<sup>1</sup> Although the document is primarily concerned with disease control and sanitation, it is a primary contributor to the APHA's recognition as one of the original forces involved in the quest to identify the "underlying multidimensional reality" (UMR) of the quality of housing and its environment.

In addition to the APHA contribution, the U.S. Congress also played a pioneering role in focusing attention on housing

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<sup>1</sup>American Public Health Association, Basic Principles of Healthful Housing (New York: The Association, 1938).

environment relationships, primarily because of the landmark legislation of the Housing Act of 1949 which called for "the realization as soon as feasible of the goal of a decent home and a suitable environment for every American family."<sup>2</sup> The 81st Congress did not define the statement but even if it had it is unlikely that its contribution would have been of a lasting nature, simply because of changing expectations, aspirations and capabilities for effecting and responding to change. Nevertheless, it was evident that scientists and legislators at the highest level were in accord as early as 1949 as to the significance of housing-environment relationships, of themselves and as part of the nation's goals for its citizens.

Concern for identifying, as well as achieving some minimum degree of quality in housing and its environment has continued to increase at an accelerated pace. One reason for the continued expenditure of effort and resources is that a wide variety of topics lie within the general rubric of quality of housing and its environment, including site selection, physical, social and comprehensive planning, segregation and integration, neighborhood involvement in the planning process, increased population pressures and population dynamics and mobility, changes in the construction industry, the pollution crisis, and so on.<sup>3</sup> Each of these topics,

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<sup>2</sup>U.S. Congress. Housing Act of 1949. Public Law 171, 81st Congress (Washington: 1949).

<sup>3</sup>These topics are discussed, and further references are provided in "Housing and its Environment: A Review of Goals, Policies and Programs" by B. Wellar in E. Moore, J. Betak, B. Wellar and A. Manji, "Comments on the Definition and Measurement of Housing Quality research report No. 46 (Evanston, Ill.: Department of Geography, Northwestern University, 1968), pp. 26-40.

in the singular and in combinations, are directly or indirectly related to housing-environment quality for one or more reasons.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to considerations which might be regarded as comprising the essence of our housing-environment, the concept of the "urban system" adds to the complexity of determining the UMR of housing-environment quality.<sup>5</sup> That is, other urban land uses and activities associated with industry, commerce, institutions, recreation, and transportation affect, and are affected by, the residential component in a number of tangible and intangible ways. People, goods and services, and ideas as well as smoke, noise, and dirt move within and among the different components of the urban system, with levels of interaction varying in intensity over time and space. Thus, housing and its environment is seen as being but part of a larger system, and hence the increased difficulty of universally defining and achieving even minimum levels of quality in our housing-environment.

The realization that housing and housing quality are more

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<sup>4</sup>Relationships among areas, people and housing are discussed in detail by A. Twichell, "Measuring the Quality of Housing in Planning for Urban Redevelopment" in Coleman Woodbury (ed.) Urban Redevelopment, Problems and Practices (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953).

<sup>5</sup>Reference to an urban system in this document implies interaction and feedback and adjustment between and among the physical components of the city and its inhabitants. In this study housing and its environment is one component among such land use categories as commercial, industrial, transportation, institutional, recreation and vacant (non-use). For an alternative view of the city as consisting of "hardware" and "software" systems, the reader is referred to an excellent statement by John P. Eberhard, "Technology for the City" in International Science and Technology (September 1966), reprinted. U.S. Congress, Senate, Federal Role in Urban Affairs, Hearings, Subcommittee on Executive Reorganization (Washington: G.P.O., 1967), pp. 3325-34.

than bricks and mortar, and are part of a very complex set of interrelated phenomena is, as noted above, a matter of long standing. However, appreciation of the variety and seriousness of mental, physical, and social problems associated with urban living appears to be a fairly recent development. This assessment of the situation is based on the tremendous increase in the ways that public agencies at all levels of government, private agencies, and institutions involved in urban planning, development and control have become involved in matters related to quality of the urban environment.<sup>6</sup>

Discussions of housing and housing quality and related considerations in urban and rural environments have proceeded on at least two fronts. First, the metaphysical concept of quality of housing and its environment has been examined. This has entailed examination of such questions as, How is housing defined?, How is housing quality defined?, How is housing related to its environment?, What are the relationships between the physical and functional attributes of housing and its environment?, How do housing and its environment affect an individual's mental, physical, and social well-being?, and How is quality of housing and its environment measured?

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<sup>6</sup>For more discussion and additional references on housing and housing quality as being more than bricks and mortar see Moore, Betak, Wellar and Manji, op cit., "Comments on the Definition and Measurement of Housing Quality"; National Commission on Urban Problems 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (Washington: Government Printing Office; 1968); More Than Shelter, Research Report No. 8, prepared for consideration of the National Commission on Urban Problems (Washington: G.P.O., 1968); and U.S. Congress, Urban America: Goals and Problems, Hearings and Material, Subcommittee on Urban Affairs (Washington: G.P.O., 1967).



Second, housing and its environment have been considered pragmatically in terms of the significance of related programs and projects to persons who are affected. Kinds of programs and projects which come to mind include urban renewal, planning of new subdivisions and public housing developments, maintenance of sanitary conditions and prevention of disease, and development of community projects to remove certain blighting features of neighborhoods. Individuals and agencies involved in such programs include representatives of federal, state, and local governments and private agencies that establish, evaluate, administer, monitor, and arrange for funding of projects and programs.

In the bibliography we attempt to represent both the methodological and practical or pragmatic aspects of research and development related to housing-environment quality. Three agencies intimately involved in both the methodological and practical aspects of the housing-environment field are the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the American Public Health Association, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. In the following pages each agency is briefly discussed with regard to its involvement in the field, and then the positions of the agencies are compared. This is done to more fully illustrate the multidimensional nature of housing-environment quality<sup>7</sup>, the difficulty of achieving consensus as to

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<sup>7</sup>An excellent statement on housing as a multi-dimensional phenomenon is found in U.S. Congress, Joint Economic Committee, Urban America: Goals and Problems, Hearings and Material, Subcommittee on Urban Affairs (Washington: G.P.O., 1967). See especially pp. 99-153, "Demographic Change and Racial Ghettos: The Crisis of American Cities," and the expert testimony in the supporting material.

what constitutes the UMR of housing-environment quality, and the problems involved in obtaining data that are timely, accurate and reliable representations of the phenomena under observation.<sup>8</sup>

#### U.S. Bureau of the Census

Any researcher investigating quality of housing must inevitably encounter U.S. Bureau of the Census reports, or at least references. This stems from the fact that the Bureau is virtually the sole collector of housing data, and primary collector of population data<sup>9</sup> at the federal level.<sup>10</sup> The Bureau, as collector, storer, retriever, and disseminator of data provides a service, and performs its functions in compliance with the directive of the Subcommittee on Census and Statistics of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, House of Representatives, U.S. Congress.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>The remainder of the Introduction is from Barry S. Wellar, "A Program for Selection and Acquisition of Housing-Environment Data," Ph.D. dissertation (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University, 1969) and Barry S. Wellar, "Specification, Acquisition and Development of Housing-Environment Data: Some Alternatives," Presented at the North American Meetings of the Regional Science Association, Santa Monica, California, 1969 (Lawrence, Ks: University of Kansas, 1969).

<sup>9</sup>The Internal Revenue Service, for example, also collects, or more precisely is the recipient of, population (socioeconomic) data.

<sup>10</sup>The Bureau of the Census is responsible for collecting a variety of data in its role as a service agency for other federal departments.

<sup>11</sup>The legal justification for the taking of a census of housing is found in Title 13, United States code, Chapter 5, Subchapter 2, Section 141(a). For insight into the relationship between the Subcommittee on Census and Statistics and the Bureau of the Census see U.S. Congress, House, Limit Categories of Questions.

The appropriate directive for Census operations is found in Title 13, United States Code, Chapter 5, Subsection 141(a), and reads:<sup>12</sup>

(a) The Secretary (of Commerce) shall in the year 1960 and every ten years thereafter, take a census of population, unemployment and housing (including utilities and equipment) as of the first day of April, which shall be known as the census date.

Selection and formulation of census questions are established within the following guidelines:<sup>13</sup>

. . . The information must be needed for the small areas, such as counties and municipalities, for which only a census ("a census" versus "a national census" is the wording used) can provide data. It must be a question to which the respondents generally can give unambiguous and reliable answers, and it must be one which is generally accepted by the public as relevant to the census . . .

#### American Public Health Association

The second agency considered is the American Public Health Association, a professional, non-political organization, long involved in matters concerning housing and health. The APHA takes the position that basic principles of healthful housing consist of environmental as well as structural considerations. Funds should

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In Decennial Censuses, Mid-Decade Census, 1970 Census Plans, and 1970 Census Questions (Washington: G.P.O., 1968, 1965 and 1967, 1967, 1966). See especially pages 33 and 34 of the latter document where the difference between examining and formulating a national census questionnaire is discussed by several subcommittee members.

<sup>12</sup>This statement was provided by letter (February 14, 1969) by Mr. Arthur Young, Chief, Housing Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census in response to a query concerning the role of observations on housing equipment in national censuses.

<sup>13</sup>U.S. Congress, House. Statement on the 1970 Census by A. Ross Eckler, Director, Bureau of the Census, before the Subcommittee on Census and Statistics, April 1, 1969, p. 2.

be expended, according to the APHA, "to develop through research, basic data sufficient to establish human levels of tolerance for crowding, congestion, noise, odor and specific endurance data . . . as they relate to housing and the residential environment."<sup>14</sup>

The APHA is attempting to guarantee that if minimum standards are to be the modus operandi of agencies concerned with basic health principles of housing and its environment, then every effort should be made to ensure that no factors are overlooked. Their position reflects many years of concern with the effect of housing and the environment on the mental, physical, and social well-being of people, and represents a viewpoint considerably different from that of the Census. The difference in viewpoints is elaborated in detail below.

#### U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

HUD is selected as the third agency because of the data required to permit implementation of its many programs. It is also chosen to illustrate that federal agencies may not be consistent in specifying what should be done with respect to non-national agencies in terms of data provided or required by federal programs. The agencies referred to are the Bureau of the Census (Department of Commerce) and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The required data being discussed are inputs to the Model

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<sup>14</sup>American Public Health Association, "Basic Health Principles of Housing and its Environment" (New York, 1968), p. 3.



Cities Program, and the Workable Program for Community Improvement.<sup>15</sup>

The Department of Housing and Urban Development's guidelines list the statistics required to evaluate applications for grants under the Model Neighborhood Area Development Program. Quality of urban life at the neighborhood level under the terms of this development program does not include the physical environment in terms of living conditions. The preponderance of socio-economic data is suggestive of studies such as social area analysis,<sup>16</sup> as opposed to the physical connotation usually associated with neighborhood development or renewal programs.<sup>17</sup> The only non-human (essentially non-socio-economic) data in the list pertain to substandard and dilapidated housing units, and housing units per acre.

Consider, on the other hand, data requirements under the terms of several other HUD programs. Reports of the Workable Program for Community Improvement include "Answers on Codes and Ordinances," "A Guide for Citizens Advisory Committees," "Answers on Neighborhood Analyses," and "Answers on Comprehensive

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<sup>15</sup> Some of the required data inputs originated under predecessors to the Department of Housing and Urban Development which evolved in 1966.

<sup>16</sup> Social area analysis is essentially concerned with examining the variations in census tract populations on the basis of social rank, urbanization, and segregation, characteristics which are all well represented in the data set in question.

<sup>17</sup> The stress on social or human items suggests that the title "Model Neighborhood Area" is almost a misnomer in that there is little data required on what is usually called the neighborhood area.

Community Plan."<sup>18</sup> On the surface it appears that these programs would have much in common with the neighborhood development programs discussed above, particularly in terms of objectives and data requirements since they are sponsored by the same Department.

The objectives are, in fact, very similar overall, since the primary concern is improvement of living conditions in general. However, the latter series of statements (Workable Programs) are much more inclusive in terms of the components of living conditions that they recognize. They provide considerably more detail for identifying those elements for which data are required to achieve certain ends. In brief, the two programs are analogous to the Bureau of the Census and APHA positions on housing quality, where the latter goes beyond the housing unit and includes environmental elements.

A final observation which points up the Workable Program's commitment to environmental considerations is based on two "Guidelines" reports.<sup>19</sup> These are entitled "Administration of a Systematic Housing Code Compliance Program," and "Housing Code Compliance During the First Year Following Adoption of the Housing Code." Both reports specifically place systematic surveillance of housing code compliance within the context of the environment, and note,

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<sup>18</sup> HUD, "A Guide for Citizens Advisory Committees," "Answers on Codes and Ordinances," "Answers on Comprehensive Community Plan," and "Answers on Neighborhood Analyses" (Washington: 1967, 1965, 1966, 1966).

<sup>19</sup> HUD, "Administration of a Systematic Housing Code Compliance Program," (GE-8); and "Housing Code Compliance During the First Year Following Adoption of the Housing Code" (No. 9); Guidelines, Workable Program for Community Improvement (Washington: dates unknown, but prepared during or after 1966).

that the interdependency of the two cannot be over-emphasized in an improvement program.<sup>20</sup> Perusal of the projects and required data inputs quickly reveals the similar positions of the APHA and the Workable Programs with respect to quality in housing and its environment.

Comparison of the Positions of the  
Bureau of the Census, APHA, and HUD

As noted above, each agency has somewhat different responsibilities and performs different functions, but each is concerned with the mental, physical, and social well-being of people. Although they do have relevance to other programs, the agencies are considered in terms of how they regard the role of housing and/or its environment as a component which affects an individual's well-being.

In terms of general features of respective programs, the subject matter encompassed by each agency is of primary importance. The exclusion of environmental data in Bureau of the Census operations data is clearly different from the practice of the APHA, and selected HUD programs. The latter agencies place structural or dwelling considerations within the broader framework of the environment, of which dwellings are a part.

Examination of the agencies in terms of program- or project-orientation also suggests several causes for differences in the

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<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 2 and 3 and p. 2. See also HUD, "Advance Notice of Revised Code Requirements for a Workable Program for Community Improvement" (Washington: no date given).

items used or advocated by the agencies. First, the Bureau of the Census program is national in scope, and represents for some localities the only means of acquiring data on some phenomena (data elements or variables). Consequently, Census operations are designed to be responsive to the needs of cities of different sizes. Second, given the demands imposed upon data collection, processing and dissemination operations, and limited resources, certain trade-offs must be made between needed and provided data.

The APHA procedure, however, is administered by local areas for local areas. As a result, the locality conducting the survey determines the trade-offs between needed and provided data. Autonomy, then, clearly makes for differences in how the respective methodologies apply at the local level.

The Bureau of the Census and APHA orientations are based on data supply considerations, whereas HUD programs involve demands for data. HUD programs require that local areas submit plans and programs supported by data on condition of housing and its environment. Not all data needs are met by Census compilations, and as a result local areas must generate certain data. Non-applicability of several Census data elements to HUD programs, and the inclusion of several APHA data elements as basic inputs, sharply points up the differences between the two federal agencies.

The factor which may be of overriding significance in this respect is that HUD represents users of data, and the Bureau of the Census is a supplier. HUD programs specify data inputs required

of local agencies, and Census programs are aimed at providing data which are in the public (local) interest for housing programs.

A second factor to be considered with respect to program orientation concerns the intent of agencies for affected programs and projects. Specifically, what is the significance of the agencies in terms of bringing about change? The responsibility of the Census is to report on the status of the nation's housing inventory. There are no operating rules or procedures associated with the taking of a national census that specifically advise local agencies of remedial measures which should be taken with respect to housing.

The APHA and HUD programs on the other hand are directly concerned with reporting on and effecting change where minimum standards are not met. Further, both agencies specify a set of standards and suggest remedial priorities for different situations. The APHA weights elements in terms of significance, but the Census does not. In the case of the former it is possible to determine the relative importance of the respective elements, for programs of the latter only partially, and imperfectly.<sup>21</sup>

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The question of weighing variables begins, at least implicitly, during the process of selecting the independent variables. In a draft memorandum the U.S. Bureau of the Census attempts to resolve the problem of developing a surrogate measure for the element "condition of unit," which appears in the 1960 Census of Housing but is not included in the 1970 Census, and thereby indirectly refers to weighing of variables. See U.S. Bureau of the Census, "Proposed Procedure for Estimating Substandard Housing in 1970." Preliminary draft. (Washington: Housing Division, 1970).



A third factor which influences the elements used in the program is the data collection agent employed by the respective organizations. In decennial censuses conducted prior to 1970, enumerators were used to acquire housing data. In 1970, enumerators will be used in conjunction with householders reporting on questionnaires. Many criticisms of the 1960 data set arose from the inferior quality of the observations that went into the housing data set, which suggests a deficiency in Census operations: the skills of data collection agents were not matched with the difficulty of tasks. Involvement of millions of individuals who have had little or no training in reporting on a number of phenomena strongly suggests that a variety of random errors will enter into the 1970 compilation. These errors will add to the systematic errors that have always been a part of such data sets.

The APHA and HUD Programs, on the other hand, rely on inspectors of local agencies to provide the data. This is not to say that persons who are not fully qualified inspectors would be unable to complete an appraisal form. However, if the goal of the survey or requirement of the plan is accurate, reliable, and reproducible data, housing or related inspectors may very well be required. If the Census cannot or does not use these kinds of specialists, then it seems likely that there must be differences in the kinds of questions asked and data generated by the respective methods.

This brief examination and comparison of general features of the program- and project-orientation of the Bureau of the Census,

APHA and HUD serves to illustrate how the agencies differ. Statements about differences in methodology do not say anything about the correctness of positions. What the discussion does establish, however, is that the APHA and HUD are in agreement in many respects. Their mutual concern for effecting change to ensure that minimum standards are met in the condition of housing and its environment, and the widespread adoption of their positions by local agencies are regarded as important first steps towards increased convergence of opinion and fact associated with housing-environment quality. Although legislative changes may be necessary, recent developments in the Bureau with regard to housing data suggest that it may become more aligned with the APHA and HUD in the not to distant future, in terms of both methodology and actual operations. Should both occur, and the latter is not by any means a certainly regardless of methodological developments due to present policies and practices<sup>22</sup>, the field would experience a dramatic step forward from both the research and applications aspects.

## 2. SOURCES OF REFERENCE

Our objective in the bibliography is to compile a selected body of references which deal with both the methodological and applied aspects of housing-environment quality, and which represent

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For a discussion of the evolution of federal statistics see R.L. Lowry, "Federal Statistics for the Sixties." Proceedings of the Business and Economic Statistics Section, American Statistical Association. (September, 1962) pp. 86-89.

the hypotheses, perceptions, and procedures of public agencies, professional groups, and others. Due to the rapid changes taking place in the field, and particularly those pertaining to the development of "social indicators," the references range over a variety of disciplines, including public health, statistics, economics, geography, and sociology. Within the public sector their counterparts would be agencies such as DHEW and DHUD at the federal level, and departments such as health, welfare, economic development, sanitation, public utilities, redevelopment, and planning at the local level.

The bibliography consists primarily of works that are available in the literature, or can be obtained from public sources such as the Government Printing Office and federal, state and local agencies. Reports which are not yet part of the open literature are included only if they are regarded as significant pieces of research, and if they serve to identify persons or groups that are active in the field but have yet to publish their findings in the open literature.

### 3. ORGANIZATION OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHY

Part A contains references which deal with development of measurement techniques, dimensions, and indicators, that is, the methodological foundations of research directly and indirectly related to determination of the quality of housing and its environment. References in PART A are assigned to the following sections:

#### A-I. Development of Measurement Techniques; Dimensions and

Indicators - General: Reports and books in this section



are those which pertain to a variety of disciplinary and functional fields, and as such are applicable directly and indirectly to measurement and evaluation of housing-environment quality.

A-II. Measurement, Dimension, and Indicators of Structural

Quality: References in this section deal solely with housing structures, and do not place housing in its larger environmental context.

A-III. Measurement, Dimensions, and Indicators of Environmental

Quality: References in this section deal solely with the residential environments, and do not simultaneously relate housing and its environment.

A-IV. Measurement, Dimensions, and Indicators of the Quality of

the Residential Environment: References in this section simultaneously relate housing and its environment in determining and evaluating the quality of living space, hence the term, residential environment.

The decision to use four sections in Part A is based on past and present practices of treating measurement and analysis techniques and subject matter independently, as well as in combinations. For example, measurement techniques having a general capability are frequently developed without any reference to phenomena-specific variables. On the other hand, data available for hypothesis testing and/or the characteristics of the phenomena to be measured may dictate or impact on the measurement techniques to be used or developed. Further, if the phenomena to be measured or evaluated are multidimensional, a systems approach may be used to

place the phenomena in perspective, but it may be necessary to make component-by-component analysis of the phenomena. Finally, a legal decree may bound methodological developments in that each component of a phenomena is in the domain of a specific agency. We are hopeful that the breakdown offered takes at least some of these factors into consideration and enables the user to readily locate references of interest.

Part B contains references which report on the application of measurement and analytical techniques and housing-environment quality data elements and items in the public sector. References in Part B are assigned to the following sections:

B-I. Federal Policies, Programs, Projects and Procedures:

References in this section report on operational policies, programs, projects, and procedures of federal (national as well as international) governments and their agencies.

B-II. State and Local Policies, Programs, Projects and Procedures:

References in this section report on operational programs, projects, and procedures of state, county, regional and municipal governments and their agencies.

There are both vertical and horizontal relationships between and among government bodies concerned with matters related to the quality of housing and its environment. It appears, however, that the dominant flows, at least in terms of visibility, are vertical, that is, from federal to non-federal and from non-federal to federal departments or agencies. This is regarded as being due primarily to the responses of non-federal agencies (or, more

generally, governments) to the development, rehabilitation, and renewal programs and requirements of federal government agencies. Hence, the decision to use a two-section approach for Part B, whereby the references in Section I document the positions and actions of federal agencies, and those in Section II document a number of responses to federal policies, programs, projects, and procedures, as well as selected reports which do not have a federal orientation.

#### 4. CODING SYSTEM

In order to minimize repetition in referencing journals, proceedings, etc., of associations and organizations, a coding system based on alphabetic ordering of selected journals, associations, etc., has been devised.

#### ACRONYMS

<u>AAAG</u>	<u>Annals of the Association of American Geographers</u>
<u>AJOPH</u>	<u>American Journal of Public Health</u>
<u>APHA</u>	<u>American Public Health Association</u>
<u>FICOHEN</u>	<u>First Invitational Conference in Health Research in Housing and its Environment, Proceedings of</u>
GPO	Government Printing Office (U.S.)
<u>JAIP</u>	<u>Journal of the American Institute of Planners</u>
<u>JASA</u>	<u>Journal of the American Statistical Association</u>
<u>LE</u>	<u>Land Economics</u>
<u>URISA</u>	<u>Urban and Regional Information Systems Association, Proceedings of</u>
WHO	World Health Organization

## PART A - METHODOLOGICAL ENTRIES

A-I. Development of Measurement Techniques, Dimensions and Indicators - General

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